

A³ merely conceptual in nature. It is the intention, therefore, to be limited only as indicated by the scope of the claims appended hereto.--.

Replace the paragraph from page 5, line 29, to page 6, line 9, with the following paragraph:

A⁴ --A surfacing layer fabricated by vacuum deposition techniques is comparatively thin; its thickness typically varies from 1 nm to 90 μ m. In spite of its infinitesimal thickness, the surfacing layer is entirely free from pores and conforms without cracks to the contour of the object being coated as the layer is produced at an atomic layer deposition level. The substrate to be surfaced by vacuum deposition can be of almost any material such as a metal, stone, plastic or glass. The surfacing materials used herein are selected from the groups of metals, metal alloys, oxides, nitrides or carbides. Different kinds of surface coatings may vary vastly in terms of their properties.--.

Page 8, line 1, delete the paragraph "Claims:" and insert the following paragraph:

--What is claimed is:--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1 to 9, without prejudice.

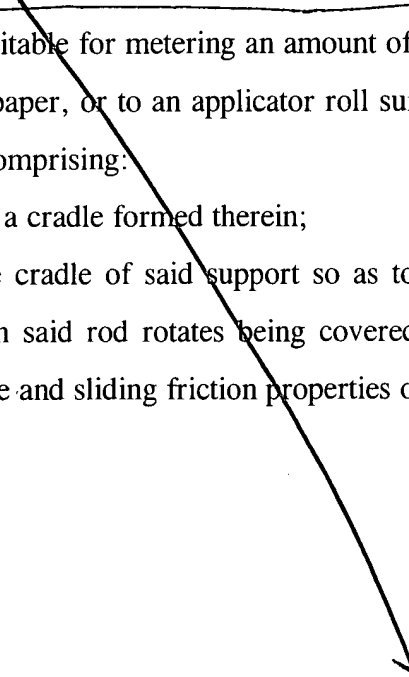
Add the following new claims:

10. A rod doctor suitable for metering an amount of a coating mix applied to a surface of a moving web of board or paper, or to an applicator roll surface of a film-transfer coater, and for leveling the applied coat, comprising:

a support frame having a cradle formed therein;

A⁵ a rod positioned in the cradle of said support so as to be capable of rotating therein, a surface of the cradle on which said rod rotates being covered by a surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of the cradle and said rod.

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11. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein a surface of the rod is covered by a surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of said rod.

12. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer has a thickness of from 1 nm to 90 μ m.

13. The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers have a thickness of from 1 nm to 90 μ m.

14. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

15. The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

16. The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

17. The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

18. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is comprised of diamond.

19. The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are comprised of diamond.

20. The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is comprised of diamond.

21. The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are comprised of diamond.

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11. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein a surface of the rod is covered by a surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of said rod.

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22. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is comprised of chromium.
23. The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are comprised of chromium.
24. The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is comprised of chromium.
25. The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are comprised of chromium.
26. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.
27. The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.
28. The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.
29. The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.
30. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is applied using a vacuum deposition technique.
31. The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are applied using a vacuum deposition technique.
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32. The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

33. The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

34. The rod doctor of claim 14, wherein the surface layer is applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

35. The rod doctor of claim 15, wherein the surface layers are applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

36. The rod doctor of claim 18, wherein the surface layer is applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

37. The rod doctor of claim 19, wherein the surface layers are applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

38. The rod doctor of claim 22, wherein the surface layer is applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

39. The rod doctor of claim 23, wherein the surface layers are applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

40. The rod doctor of claim 26, wherein the surface layer is applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

41. The rod doctor of claim 27, wherein the surface layers are applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

42. The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is applied using a thermal spraying technique.

43. The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are applied using a thermal spraying technique.

44. The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is applied using a thermal spraying technique.

45. The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are applied using a thermal spraying technique.

46. The rod doctor of claim 14, wherein the surface layer is applied using a thermal spraying technique.

47. The rod doctor of claim 15, wherein the surface layers are applied using a thermal spraying technique.

48. The rod doctor of claim 18, wherein the surface layer is applied using a thermal spraying technique.

49. The rod doctor of claim 19, wherein the surface layers are applied using a thermal spraying technique.

50. The rod doctor of claim 22, wherein the surface layer is applied using a thermal spraying technique.

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52. The rod doctor of claim 26, wherein the surface layer is applied using a thermal spraying technique.

53. The rod doctor of claim 27, wherein the surface layers are applied using a thermal spraying technique.

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